

Module B:

How to Conduct a Class

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Overview

Introduction

This module will show you how to conduct a class.

Learning Objectives

After completing this module the Nutrition Assistant will be able to:

- prepare for a class,
- develop a sample lesson plan* for a group nutrition education session,
- describe how to effectively communicate with the group,
- close a session using summarization of class content,
- explain the importance of evaluation and 2 ways to evaluate a session, and
- conduct a class session in a role play situation.

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* Words that you may not know are **underlined**. Definitions for these words can be found in the **Glossary** at the end of the module. (Note: Words are only underlined the first few times they appear in the text.)

Group Education

Definition

Group education is education where several participants meet and share the learning experience.

Benefits

Participants benefit from nutrition education in groups. Group education allows participants to:

- meet other people,
 - learn from each other,
 - share personal stories, and
 - share similar problems and concerns.
-

Disadvantages

Unfortunately, there are some disadvantages in doing nutrition education in groups. These include:

- the educator cannot conduct the session to meet all the participants' needs;
 - participants may disrupt the session; and
 - children may disrupt the session more than in an individual education session.
-

Conducting a Successful Class

Feeling at Ease

Teaching a class may be the one thing you feel the least comfortable doing. This may be especially true if you have never taught a class.

You will feel more at ease if you practice, practice, practice!

Successful Sessions

You can teach interesting and successful classes at WIC by following the steps in the chart below.

Step	What to do:
1	Prepare ahead of time
2	Use good communication skills
3	Be participant-centered
4	Show the participants what you mean
5	Check for understanding
6	Allow time for practice
7	Close the session

You will find details on each of these steps in the sections that follow.

Preparing for a Class

Be Organized

Being organized will help you greatly.

Your class will usually go well if you prepare ahead of time.

Suggestions

Use the list below to guide you in preparing for a class:

- gather materials and equipment
- set up the room
- be familiar with the equipment and make sure it is working properly
- prepare and review the lesson plan
- prepare for questions
- prepare for children

The chart on the next page describes these in more detail.

Learning Activity 1

To learn more about preparing for a class you may want to try **Learning Activity 1** found at the end of this module.

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Preparing for a Class (continued)

Suggestions for Preparing for a Class

<p>Gather Materials & Equipment- Get together whatever you will need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• flip chart & paper,• handouts,• food models,• posters,• props (such as dolls for demonstrations)• TV/VCR &/or• videos.
<p>Set Up the Room</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrange chairs so that participants can see and talk easily to each other (circle or half circle usually works well)• Set up equipment that will be used during the session.• Know the location of light switches & electrical outlets.
<p>Be Familiar with the Equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Become familiar with the use of TV's, VCR's, easels, and other equipment.• Make sure equipment is working properly.• Be prepared in case you have equipment problems.
<p>Prepare & Review the Lesson Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a lesson plan that covers the "need to know" information NOT the "nice to know" information• Arrange information in a logical order.• Cover 2 or 3 main points.
<p>Prepare for Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read a variety of materials on the topic.• Remember that no one has all the answers. (Use responses such as, "<i>I don't know but I'll check with the nutritionist after class and let you know later.</i>")
<p>Prepare for Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be ready for children who are not part of the class.• Have activities & supplies (coloring crayons, paper, stickers, etc.) available.• Set up childcare when possible.

Lesson Plans

Definition

A lesson plan is an outline of what the class will cover.

Using a Lesson Plan

Use a lesson plan to guide you during the session. You will NOT always follow it exactly! You may need to change it to meet the needs of the participants.

Parts of a Lesson Plan

A lesson plan has several parts. What these are called is not as important as what they contain. (Your agency may use different names for some of the parts.)

A lesson plan usually has:

1. opener,
 2. objective(s),
 3. prerequisite learning,
 4. content (or instruction),
 5. learner guidance,
 6. practice,
 7. feedback, and
 8. closure.
-

Chart Describing a Lesson Plan

The chart on the next page describes the parts of a lesson plan.

Learning Activity 2

To learn more about how to develop motivators or openers you may want to try **Learning Activity 2** found at the end of this module.

Learning Activity 3

To learn more about how to develop a lesson plan you may want to try **Learning Activity 3** found at the end of this module.

Lesson Plans (continued)

Parts of a Lesson Plan

Part & Description	Example
Opener What gets the participants interested at the beginning of the lesson.	<i>For a session on baby bottle tooth decay, the educator begins by showing a slide of a child with tooth decay.</i>
Objective(s) What you want participants to learn or learn to do.	<i>Objective for a session on breastfeeding: All participants will be able to identify 3 benefits of breastfeeding.</i>
Prerequisite Learning Information or skills participants need before they can learn or develop a skill.	<i>Before conducting a class on breastfeeding, participants might need to know the meanings of terms such as “mastitis” or “lactation”.</i>
Content/Instruction Information or skills participants will learn during the session.	<i>During a session on breastfeeding, participants learn about: nursing positions and techniques.</i>
Learner Guidance Information that helps participants understand the topic.	<i>During a session on breastfeeding the educator clears up the myths about breastfeeding.</i>
Practice Activity in which participants use the information or skill they have learned.	<i>During a session on healthy snacks, each participant is asked to write down a list of 5 healthy snacks.</i>
Feedback Suggestions during or after practice.	<i>During a session on healthy snacks, the educator notices several participants have written down fruit drinks. She reminds them that fruit drinks are high in sugar and usually low in vitamins.</i>
Closure This is ending the lesson and includes summarizing and evaluation.	<i>At the close of the session, the educator summarizes the lesson and asks the participants to share how the session went.</i>

Communication Skills

Communication Affects the Session

Using your lesson plan as a guide, you will communicate with the group. How you communicate with the group will greatly affect the success of the session.

Good Communication Skills

Communicate with the group in a professional way. You can do this by:

- welcoming and thanking the participants for coming to the class,
- asking participants to briefly introduce themselves (if there is enough time to do this),
- presenting information in a clear and simple way (use short phrases and sentences),
- using a friendly tone of voice and making sure to speak loud enough so that participants can hear what you say,
- using positive body language, and
- showing respect for all participants.

You may want to read the *Effective Communication Skills* module for more information on this topic.

Being Participant-Centered

Definition

Being participant-centered means focusing on the participant's concerns and involving her/him in making decisions and solving problems.

Focus on the Participants

Each class you conduct should focus on the participants in the group.

You may feel a need to focus on the material you are supposed to cover. This is understandable, but do NOT ignore the needs and concerns of the group!

State the Benefits of the Session

At the beginning of the session, participants often wonder "What's in this for me?!" Make sure the participants understand how they will benefit from the session.

Explore the Needs of the Group

At the beginning of the session, check to see what the participants want to learn.

Encourage Participation & Sharing

Encourage participation and sharing among group members. Class participants usually have a lot to offer.

Be Flexible

Be ready to change the lesson plan to meet the needs of the group.

Not every group will learn in the same way nor will have the same needs, experiences, or interests.

Showing the Participants What You Mean

Showing (or Modeling) Helps Understanding

Showing participants what you mean will help them understand the lesson better.

Talking alone often does not work in helping participants “see” what you mean.

Ways to Model

You can model what you mean by using:

- food models to show portion sizes,
 - breast models that show lactation,
 - props such as baby dolls,
 - case studies to show how other participants have handled situations, and/or
 - role plays to show how participants might deal with a real life situation.
-

Checking for Understanding

Ongoing Process

Throughout the session, you will want to make sure participants understand the lesson.

Make sure you check participants' understanding often.

Ways to Check for Understanding

You can check for understanding by asking participants to:

- answer some simple questions,
 - raise their hands when they feel they have progressed to a certain point,
 - pair up and quiz each other,
 - explain what they have learned,
 - show you what they have learned, and/or
 - complete a test, survey or check-off list.
-

Allowing Time for Practice

Important to Learning

Practice is a very important part of learning.

Always give participants a chance to try out what they have learned.

Practice during the Session

Make sure to include practice activities in each lesson plan. Make these activities:

- fun and
- not too difficult.

You will want to make sure that everyone is able to succeed when they do the practice activities.

Practice at Home

You may also want to have participants choose 1 or 2 activities that they can practice at home.

Closing the Session

Definition

Closure is ending the session.

Allow Enough Time

When ending a session make sure you allow time for:

- a summary,
 - an evaluation, and
 - questions.
-

Summary

Summarize what was covered during the class. Focus on 2 or 3 key points. Keep it short and simple.

You may want to ask each participant to briefly state what s/he learned from the session.

Evaluation

Evaluation is finding out:

- if participants have learned specific information or skills, and/or
- how a session went.

Participants, the educator, co-workers, and supervisors may evaluate a session.

You may evaluate a session by:

- asking participants to answer questions about what they learned,
 - having participants show you what they learned,
 - having a co-worker or supervisor observe and assess the session, and/or
 - objectively assessing the session yourself.
-

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Closing the Session (continued)

Evaluation (continued)

An evaluation may be:

- written, such as an evaluation form or
 - verbal, such as comments given by participants after a session.
-

Closing Comments

End the class with a pleasant message. You can use comments such as:

- *“Thank you for participating today.”* or
 - *“I look forward to seeing you again.”*
-

Learning Activity 4

To learn more about how to close a session you may want to try **Learning Activity 4** found at the end of this module.

Learning Activity 5

To learn more about how to conduct a class you may want to try **Learning Activity 5** found at the end of this module.

Summary

Benefits of Group Education

Group education allows participants to:

- meet other people,
 - learn from each other,
 - share personal stories, and
 - share similar problems and concerns.
-

Steps to Conducting a Successful Class

You can teach interesting and successful classes at WIC by:

- preparing ahead of time,
 - using good communication skills,
 - being participant-centered,
 - showing the participant what you mean,
 - checking for understanding,
 - allowing time for practice, and
 - closing the session.
-

Lesson Plans

A lesson plan is an outline of what the class will cover. A lesson plan usually has:

1. opener,
2. objectives,
3. prerequisite learning,
4. content or instruction,
5. learner guidance,
6. practice,
7. feedback, and
8. closure.

Use lesson plans to guide you. Change lesson plans to meet the needs of the group.

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Summary (continued)

**Communication
Affects the Session**

Communicate with the group in a professional way by:

- welcoming and thanking participants for coming to the class,
 - asking participants to briefly introduce themselves,
 - presenting information in a clear and simple way,
 - using a friendly tone of voice and making sure to speak loud enough so that participants can hear what you say,
 - using positive body language, and
 - showing respect for all participants.
-

Glossary

active learning- In active learning the learner is involved in or participates in the learning such as through discussion or doing a role play.

check for understanding- A check for understanding is making sure participants understand what has been taught.

closure- Closure is ending the session and usually includes summarization and evaluation.

content- Content (or instruction) is the information or skills participants learn during the session.

evaluation- Evaluation is finding out: (1) if the participants learned specific information or skills, and/or (2) how the participants felt about the session.

feedback- Feedback is suggestions the educator gives the participant during or after practice.

group education- Group education is education where several participants meet and share the learning experience.

interactive learning- Interactive learning actively involves the participant in the learning experience through activities such as role plays or group discussions.

learner guidance- Learner guidance is helping the participant understand the lesson.

lesson plan- A lesson plan is an outline of what the class will cover.

non-verbal cue- A non-verbal cue is a message that does not use words. Non-verbal cues can include facial expression, posture or eye contact.

objectives- Objectives are what the participants will learn or learn to do.

opener- An opener is what gets people interested at the beginning of the lesson.

Glossary (continued)

participant-centered- Being participant-centered means focusing on the participant's concerns and involving her/him in making decisions and solving problems.

practice- Practice is the activity in which participants use the information or skill they have learned.

prerequisite learning- Prerequisite learning is the information or skills participants need before they can learn or develop a skill.

role play- A role play is a situation in which two or more people act out a scene.

Progress Check

1. List 2 advantages of group education.

1. _____
2. _____

2. List at least 3 things you would do to be prepared for teaching a class.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3. List the parts of a lesson plan.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Progress Check (continued)

4. Which of the following will help you conduct a class successfully?

- _____ setting up the room ahead of time
- _____ focusing on the topic and materials and not on what the participants want
- _____ using models, role plays or other ways to show participants what is meant
- _____ only summarizing what was discussed if time allows
- _____ thanking participants for coming
- _____ asking participants what they thought about the session
- _____ allowing talkative participants to speak often

5. Mark the following as “TRUE” or “FALSE”.

- _____ Being *participant-centered* means focusing on the participant’s concerns and involving her/him in making decisions and solving problems.
- _____ You should ask participants what they know and want to learn in the middle of the session.
- _____ You should never change the lesson plan once you have developed it.
- _____ You can model what you mean by using food models, demonstrations, props, and role plays.
- _____ You should allow time for questions.
- _____ The *objectives* of a lesson plan state what the participants will learn or learn to do by the end of the session.

Progress Check (continued)

6. Describe 2 ways to evaluate a session.

1. _____

2. _____

Learning Activities

The following activities are included and are recommended for interactive learning:

- Learning Activity 1: Preparing for a Class
- Learning Activity 2: Openers
- Learning Activity 3: Developing a Lesson Plan
- Learning Activity 4: Summarizing a Session
- Learning Activity 5: Role Plays

Activity 1: Preparing for a Class

Learning Objectives After completing this activity, the Nutrition Assistant will be able to:

- prepare for a class.
-

Background The following list will help you in preparing for a class.

- Gather materials and equipment.
 - Set up room.
 - Be familiar with equipment (TV, VCR, etc.).
 - Prepare and review lesson plan.
 - Prepare for questions.
 - Prepare for children.
-

Instructions

1. Ask your mentor or supervisor to arrange for you to:
 - assist a co-worker getting ready for a class session and
 - observe the co-worker conduct the session.
 2. Use the form on the next page to record what s/he does.
 3. Talk with your mentor or supervisor about what you observed.
-

Activity 1: Preparing for a Class

Part of Session	<i>Check off the items that you observe.</i>
Before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gathers materials and equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Sets up room <input type="checkbox"/> Is familiar with equipment (TV, VCR, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Prepares and reviews lesson plan <input type="checkbox"/> Prepares for questions <input type="checkbox"/> Prepares for children
During	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Begins class on time <input type="checkbox"/> Uses good communication skills <input type="checkbox"/> Is participant-centered <input type="checkbox"/> Shows participants what s/he means <input type="checkbox"/> Checks for understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Allows time for practice <input type="checkbox"/> Uses interactive learning activities where possible
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Summarizes main points <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluates the session <input type="checkbox"/> Allows time for questions <input type="checkbox"/> Closes with a pleasant message
Additional Comments:	

Activity 2: Openers

Learning Objectives After completing this activity, the Nutrition Assistant will be able to:

- prepare an opener for a class.

Background

An opener or motivator gets the participants interested at the beginning of the lesson.

Openers usually take less than 5 minutes.

Effective openers are any **activities that get the attention of the participants.**

Some examples of openers are listed in the chart on the next page.

Instructions

1. Ask your mentor or supervisor if your agency has any resources about openers. These may help you with this learning activity.
2. Ask your mentor for a list of class topics offered by your agency.
3. Select 5 topics and think of an opener for each of these.
4. List the 5 topics and describe the opener for each on the *Openers* form. You may want to review the list of examples to get started.
5. Ask your mentor or supervisor to look over the openers you listed.

Sample Openers

Topic	Opener
Healthy Snacks	<i>Educator displays a poster where carrot strips are packaged like French fries.</i>
Fruits & Vegetables	<i>Educator walks into room with a bowl of fruit on her/his head.</i>
Breastfeeding	<i>Educator brings in a breast pump.</i>
Child Safety	<i>Educator shows a doll strapped into a child car seat incorrectly and asks what's wrong.</i>
Postpartum Depression	<i>Educator pretends to burst into tears, as the session is about to begin.</i>
Infant Development	<i>Educator plays a tape of baby lullabies.</i>
Infant Feeding	<i>Educator gives each participant a sippy cup.</i>
Food Pyramid	<i>Educator gives each participant a food guide pyramid magnet.</i>
Parenting	<i>Educator pretends to be disciplining a young child who has acted inappropriately.</i>

Activity 2: Openers

Topic	Opener
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Activity 3: Developing a Lesson Plan

Learning Objectives After completing this activity, the Nutrition Assistant will be able to:

- prepare a lesson plan for a specific nutrition topic.

Background

A lesson plan is an outline of what the class will cover. A lesson plan usually has:

- opener,
- objectives,
- prerequisite learning,
- content or instruction,
- learner guidance,
- practice,
- feedback, and
- closure.

Adults learn best through interactive learning. Interactive learning refers to learning in which the learner is actively involved in the learning experience. Interactive learning techniques include:

- brainstorming,
- role-playing,
- demonstrations,
- case studies, and
- games.

Make sure to include interactive learning in your lesson plan.

(See the *Adult Learning Theory* module for more information about interactive learning.)

continued on next page

Activity 3: Developing a Lesson Plan

Instructions

1. Using the lesson plan form on the next page, develop a lesson plan for a nutrition topic of your choice. Make sure to include interactive learning.
 2. Your agency may have some sample lessons available to you for review.
 3. Talk to your supervisor or mentor if you need some help preparing the plan.
 4. Show your lesson plan to your supervisor or mentor. Discuss how the lesson could be used at your local agency.
-

Activity 3: Developing a Lesson Plan

Instructor:		Date:
Topic:		
Prerequisite Learning: <i>Before starting the lesson participants will need to know</i>		
Learning Objectives: <i>After this lesson participants will</i>		
Opener ____minutes		
Content/ Instructions ____minutes	<i>Main Topics:</i>	
Learner Guidance ____minutes	<i>Remind learners of following points to assist with understanding:</i>	
Practice ____minutes		
Feedback ____minutes		
Closure ____minutes	<i>Summary of Session:</i> <i>Evaluation Method:</i>	

Activity 4: Summarizing a Session

Learning Objectives After completing this activity, the Nutrition Assistant will be able to:

- summarize a session.
-

Background

When summarizing a session:

- Focus on 2 or 3 key points.
- Keep it short and simple.

You can also ask each participant to briefly state what s/he has learned from the session.

Instructions

1. For each of the 3 sample discussions described on the following pages give a brief summary.
 2. Keep the summary short and simple. A few sentences usually work fine.
 3. Ask your mentor or supervisor to review your responses. Ask her/him to make any suggestions.
-

Activity 4: Summarizing a Session

1. **Session on Breastfeeding:** *The participants talked about why it was difficult to breastfeed. Comments included: “Every time my baby cries people tell me to give her a bottle;” “I don’t feel like I have enough milk;” “Do small breasts really produce less milk?” Participants also said that they knew breastfeeding was important but needed help.*

How could an educator summarize this session?

2. **Session on Child Safety:** *The participants talked about keeping their children safe. Comments included: “I live in an upstairs apartment and I worry my toddler will fall down the stairs when I’m not looking.” “My baby sitter sometimes does things that worry me.” A lot of discussion focused on how to get and use car seats. Participants were especially interested in a local car seat loan program.*

How could an educator summarize this session?

3. **Session on Postpartum Depression:** *The group was quiet at first. Participants did not realize that others had also experienced a “blue” feeling. As soon as the group realized they shared a common experience, participants began to share their solutions on how to feel better. One participant said, “Sleep when the baby sleeps. It helps to not feel so tired!” Another participant suggested, “Ask for help. Get a friend to watch the kids even if it’s just for a few minutes!”*

How could an educator summarize this session?

Activity 5: Role Plays

Learning Objectives After completing this activity, the Nutrition Assistant will be able to:

- conduct a class session in a role play situation.

Instructions

1. Prepare to conduct a class in a role play situation using the lesson plan you prepared in Learning Activity 2.
 2. Arrange to have your mentor or supervisor and several co-workers participate. Ask them to act and respond as though they are participants.
 3. Use the form on the next page to guide you.
 4. Ask your mentor or supervisor for feedback on the session.
-

Check Off List for Conducting a Class

	<i>Did you:</i>
Before the Session	<input type="checkbox"/> Gather materials & equipment? <input type="checkbox"/> Set up room? <input type="checkbox"/> Learn how to use equipment (TV, VCR, etc.)? <input type="checkbox"/> Check to make sure equipment is working? <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare & review lesson plan? <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for questions? <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for children?
During the Session	<input type="checkbox"/> Begin class on time? <input type="checkbox"/> Use good communication skills? <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on participant needs & concerns? <input type="checkbox"/> Show participants what you mean? <input type="checkbox"/> Check for understanding? <input type="checkbox"/> Allow time for practice? <input type="checkbox"/> Use interactive learning activities where possible?
Closing the Session	<input type="checkbox"/> Summarize the main points? <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate the session? <input type="checkbox"/> Allow time for questions? <input type="checkbox"/> Close with a pleasant message?
Additional Reminders:	

Progress Check Answers

1. List 2 advantages of group education.

Any 2 of the responses below are acceptable:

- 1. meet other people,***
- 2. learn from each other,***
- 3. share personal stories, and***
- 4. share similar problems and concerns.***

2. List at least 3 things you would do to be prepared for teaching a class.

Any 3 of the responses below are acceptable:

- 1. gather materials and equipment,***
- 2. set up room,***
- 3. be familiar with the equipment,***
- 4. prepare and review the lesson plan,***
- 5. prepare for questions, and***
- 6. prepare for children.***

3. List the parts of a lesson plan.

- 1. opener,***
- 2. objectives,***
- 3. prerequisite learning,***
- 4. content or instruction,***
- 5. learner guidance,***
- 6. practice,***
- 7. feedback, and***
- 8. closure.***

Progress Check Answers (continued)

4. Which of the following will help you conduct a class successfully?

- ☒ setting up the room ahead of time
- ☐ focusing on the topic and materials and not on what the participants want
- ☒ using models, role plays or other ways to show participants what is meant
- ☐ only summarizing what was discussed if time allows
- ☒ thanking participants for coming
- ☒ asking participants what they thought about the session
- ☐ allowing talkative participants to speak often

5. Mark the following as “TRUE” or “FALSE”.

TRUE Being *participant-centered* means focusing on the participant's concerns and involving her/him in making decisions and solving problems.

FALSE You should ask participants what they know and want to learn in the middle of the session.

FALSE You should never change the lesson plan once you have developed it.

TRUE You can model what you mean by using food models, demonstrations, props, and role plays.

TRUE You should allow time for questions.

TRUE The *objectives* of a lesson plan state what the participants will learn or learn to do by the end of the session.

Progress Check Answers (continued)

6. Describe 2 ways to evaluate a session.

Any 2 of the responses below are acceptable:

- ***asking participants to answer questions about what they learned,***
- ***having participants show you what they learned,***
- ***having a co-worker or supervisor observe & assess the session, and/or***
- ***objectively assessing the session yourself.***